

STRAIGHT FROM THE STATEHOUSE

MCGREEVEY CONVENES TEACHER TOWN HALL MEETING

Governor McGreevey and Education Commissioner Librera hosted a Town Meeting for Middlesex County educators last week.

"To make meaningful changes in the lives of our children and accomplish real reform, we will continue to work closely with parents, teachers and schools," he said

The Governor has pledged to meet with teachers in each county to explain his educational reform agenda and to engage in an open dialogue with the teaching community.

The next Teacher Town Hall Meeting will take place on November 18th at Raritan Bridgewater Middle School in Bridgewater.

MCGREEVEY AND SENIORS: WORKING TOGETHER

Reaffirming his commitment to a strong and independent Department of Public Advocate, Governor McGreevey outlined his plans for the re-establishment of the cabinet-level office.

The Governor and AARP New Jersey hosted the first of six Senior Seminars. This month's seminar was entitled "Reestablishment of the Public Advocate."

"My administration remains committed to making state government more open, responsive, responsible and accountable," McGreevey said. "We must bring back a level of accountability to state government that people both expect and deserve.

Following the seminar, the Governor joined the leadership of AARP and State legislators in support of efforts to stop telemarketers from making unwanted calls. He called on the State Legislature to pass the strongest legislation possible.

"This is an issue that affects everyone, and as we work to improve the quality of life in this State, we are determined to make un-



Gov. McGreevey calls for tougher telemarketing legislation at Statehouse press conference with AARP.

wanted telemarketing calls a thing of the past," he said. I call upon legislators from both sides of the aisle to send to my desk the strongest possible piece of legislation."

More than 20 states have prohibited telemarketers from calling anyone who registers with a state-created Do Not Call list. Residents can register on the state's web site, by calling a toll-free number, or mailing a registration form to get their name on the list.

MCGREEVEY UNVEILS HIGH SPEED E-ZPASS

Governor McGreevey announced a plan to implement high-speed E-ZPass lanes along the New Jersey Turnpike and Garden State Parkway to help alleviate traffic congestion.

"High-speed E-ZPass is another way we are going to keep New Jersey moving and less time in their cars in traffic," said McGreevey.

The barrier-free lanes positioned at key toll plazas along the roadways would allow motorists to travel through the toll lanes at speeds close to 50 miles per hour and reduce delays associated with traditional toll taking methods .

A high-speed E-ZPass lane can accommodate 2,000 vehicles per hour—almost double the amount as current E-ZPass lanes.

MCGREEVEY SUPPORTS DIGITAL GOVERNMENT

Addressing more than 400 executive and managerial-level technology staff representing county and municipal government, the educational community, and the State, Governor McGreevey reaffirmed his commitment to making New Jersey government more consumer friendly through state-of-the-art information technology.



Governor McGreevey speaks with Middlesex County teachers at the second Teacher's Town Hall Meeting.

"We want to make government accessible to all our citizens – in living rooms, in classrooms, and in boardrooms across this state. By ef-

fectively employing state-of-the-art information technology, we will give government back to the people," said

the Governor. He also outlined several new technology initiatives designed to provide speedier government services.

McGreevey indicated that the State is dedicating nearly \$540 million a year to information technology – for people, for hardware and software, for telecommunications and for special projects – to make government more accessible. This represents just under 9 percent of the State's operating budget.

MCGREEVEY ANNOUNCES NJ TO SAVE \$1.36 M ON PHONE SERVICE

Governor McGreevey and Chief Information Officer Judith Teller announced that the State will save a total of \$1.36 million on annual phone bills as a result of a review of the State's telephone service.

"Saving over \$1.36 million this year on our phone service contract is an extraordinary accomplishment and we will continue to look for additional savings," said

McGreevey.

The State will save \$524,400 a year thanks to Teller's scrutiny of how employees accessed the State's network system. In addition, the State will save an additional \$839,000 on its annual phone bill.

Previously, the State's annual contract with Verizon for Centrex tele-

phone services was \$11.969 million. With a newly negotiated contract, which runs through August 2003, the State expects to spend \$11.130 million, a reduction of 7 percent at current usage rates.

The new rates were effective as of October 25, 2002.

MCGREEVEY DESIGNATES HALLOWEEN AS "UNICEF DAY"

Governor McGreevey signed Senate Joint Resolution No. 32 which designates October 31st of each year as "UNICEF Day" in New Jersey.

The purpose of the new law is to honor the global efforts of UNICEF in helping underprivileged children.

The law calls on New Jerseyans to observe Halloween as "UNICEF Day" and to support UNICEF NJ activities, such as its annual fundraiser, "Trick or Treat for UNICEF."

UNICEF, the United Nation's Children Fund, works in 161 countries to assist poor children and their families, particularly in devastated

areas and developing countries.

UNICEF NJ works with schools throughout New Jersey to raise funds for the organization, as well as to educate children about the living conditions of their counterparts in other nations.

SJR38/ AJR13 passed both houses unanimously.